



**Georgia Office**

## Press Release

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### **Mary S. Rodriguez of Atlanta Named SBA Women in Business Advocate of the Year**

**ATLANTA, Ga.**—Mary S. Rodriguez, a business consultant, has been selected the 2004 Women in Business Advocate of the Year in Georgia.

Mary is President and co-owner of the HilRod Group Inc., an Atlanta-based financial and management consulting firm. Mary received her SBA award Thursday (5/06) at a luncheon hosted by the Georgia Lenders Quality Circle. The event was held at the Cobb Galleria Centre.

Mary, a business consultant for more than 20 years, was nominated for the award by Lauren Rocereta of EPIC IT Inc.

“Mary’s community service and professional background clearly show she has a real passion for helping women business owners succeed,” said Terri L. Denison, SBA Georgia District Director. “I can understand why our judges selected her for the award.”

As a financial consultant, Mary has been an inspiration to many of the members of the local chapter of the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO). She has served on the NAWBO Atlanta Chapter Board for three years and was active in the development of the group’s CEO Roundtable Program. The CEO Roundtable discussion groups provide a forum for business owners to discuss various issues and receive constructive input from other members.

In recognition of her efforts for NAWBO, Mary was selected as the Atlanta Member of the Year for 2003. She also represented the Atlanta Chapter last year at the National Association’s Public Policy Days conference in Washington, D.C.

Mary is also an active member of the Atlanta Venture Forum Inc., the Association for Corporate Growth, and the Women’s Finance Exchange. She serves on several committees with the Georgia Society of CPA’s and is an active fund raiser for the Atlanta Women’s Foundation.

The HilRod Group offers strategic financial solutions for emerging and growth businesses by providing strategy, analysis and problem solving for entrepreneurs and small businesses. Before founding the firm, Mary spent over 10 years in public accounting and consulting, serving clients that included Times Mirror, Scotty’s, and Fotomat Corporation.

A native of West Virginia, Mary received her BA and Masters degrees in Accounting at the University of South Florida. She is a licensed CPA in the State of Florida and a Fellow with the Georgia Society of CPA's.

With her business partner, Mary earlier led the buyout of a \$20 million, privately-owned plastics extrusion company and spent five years as its Vice President of Finance and Administration. During this time, she was responsible for modernizing the company's information system and secured a multi-year supply contract with UPS. Under her management, the company's financial performance improved thereby boosting profits to help service a \$10 million buyout debt.

*Expo '04, the SBA's national small business conference, will be held in Orlando on May 19-21. For more information, please go to [www.sba.gov/50/Expo 2004](http://www.sba.gov/50/Expo 2004).*

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